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Drawn by Charles Knight.

MONDA

BY GEORGE PARSONS LATHROP.

Accompanied by illustrations from the Artist Lansing's portfolio.

II.—Continued.

THE lady of his vision, the girl he had seen last night under the moon-rays !
How strange to meet her now, in this commonplace, accidental way !

"Schemerhorn, old man," said Lansing, with a step forward, grasping the rosy, stout idealist's hand, "I am glad to see you."

"Miss Morton," said the idealist, "let me present to you my friend, Mr. Lansing;" whereupon presentation took place, and Lansing became known.

"When did you come down, old fellow?" Schemerhorn asked.

"To-day."

"Ah ! That's good."

"Miss Morton," said Lansing, "allow me to present my friend, Mr. Raynor," And Stephen, in his turn, became an acknowledged human being.

Introductions followed to Selden and to Monda, who was spoken of as "Miss Rhodes."

"How very charming all this is," remarked Selden, bashfully, and yet with an air



From a painting by J. H. Sharp.

WATCHING THE PANTOMIME.



Drawn by A. Tresize Saunders.

AN IDEAL HEAD.

kitchen and an empty hearth. It will be from some living person. It might be"—he hesitated—from some ideal man or woman."

Raynor fancied that the young millionaire threw a great deal of meaning into this remark, as he fixed his eyes upon Monda's. But she seemed to be quite unconscious of its application.

"Mr. Raynor," she said, turning to Stephen, "although we have never met before, I have seen some of your work in painting and modelling. I hope you haven't altogether abandoned it."

"No, Miss Rhodes, I can assure you I haven't," he answered. "In fact, I have just decided to begin again; and I think *now* there may be some hope for me."

"Ah, then you are beyond me," said Monda, smiling. "I go on working, but I can't accomplish anything. There is no hope for *me*. I don't succeed in drawing or painting; and, what is worse, the sketch club continually ask me to pose for them; and yet, when I do so, none of them can make anything—

of conviction that anything he might say carried a good deal of weight. "So quaint and novel! I would almost like to have a little place like this, myself."

"Why don't you?" Raynor asked. But Selden immediately glared at him in reproof, as though to say: "It's well enough for me to entertain that wish as a fancy, but what right have you to suggest that I should carry it out?"

"Oh, Mr. Selden," Monda struck in, gayly, "what a happy thought! We amateurs in art, with all our earnestness, need some great or else very simple touch of reality to give us power. If you had such a place as this, it might be a genuine inspiration!"

"No," Selden answered. "If I get inspiration it will not be from an old



C. Gastmann

Drawn by Christina Gastmann.

TELLING THE GOOD QUALITIES OF HIS PET.

either in black and white, or color, that they are satisfied with."

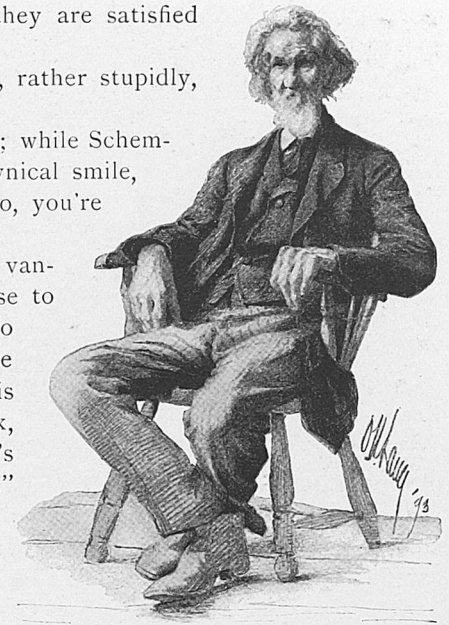
"I don't wonder," Stephen blurted out, rather stupidly, but with utmost earnestness.

Selden and Dora Morton looked horrified; while Schemmhorn, the idealist, pursed his lips into a cynical smile, and Lansing whispered to Raynor: "Hullo, you're about as bad as I am."

But, instead of showing any trace of hurt vanity, Monda said: "Of course, I am of no use to art, in any way. Yet something compels me to devote myself to it, just the same. I have heard, Mr. Raynor, that you have had this same kind of feeling about your own work, although some of it seems to me so fine. It's a comfort to have companions in misfortune."

Lansing burst into frank laughter. "Well, for downright candor, you are a pair!" he shouted, genially. "If ever I heard two such speeches——"

It did sound, indeed, as though Monda had said something rather severe. Schemmhorn, Miss Morton, and Selden rearranged their countenances a little, and brought their expression of disapproval to bear on Monda, this time.



Drawn by O. N. Lang.

IN THE WINTER OF LIFE.



From a painting by J. Campbell Phillips.

SAMBO.

Stephen, however, was not at all disturbed. "You spoke of the touch of reality just now," he said. "If you will permit me to call upon you, Miss Rhodes, with Mr. Lansing, while I am here in Easthampton, I should be very glad to try modelling a portrait-head of you."

It was a hardy suggestion, most astonishing to Dora Morton and to Selden. If conventional manners had permitted, they would have opened their mouths in surprise as wide as the gaping fireplace. But since nothing of this kind could be done, their lips remained close and prim.

"I shall be glad to see you and Mr. Lansing," said Monda; "but I warn you that if you attempt to make a portrait of any kind, it will be a disheartening experience."

She smiled gently, as a child might, nodding her head a little. Then Ray-



Drawn by Harry S. Watson.

TAKING IT EASY.

plexioned man, dressed in soft flannels and cheerful "blazer," who was turning in at that lane. "By all the maritime saints!" he exclaimed in a subdued voice to his comrade; "there is the sailor-man of the sloop who watched Wakeman and me so carefully yesterday; and he is in disguise!"

The presence of this suspicious character gave Raynor a tingle of surprise and interest. "He must not see *me*, Lansing," he said, quickly; "but we ought to see more of *him*. Wakeman is decidedly a mystery, and this fellow is even more obscure, because he's the shadow of that. Depend upon it, he is the man who was tracking my *compagnon de voyage* through the woods last night. You go in to the tennis ground and find out something about him."

As Lansing was athletic, fond of sport, and a member of the tennis club, he found it easy to make acquaintance with the stranger, whom he invited to play, and discovered to be handy enough with his racket.

"He gave his name," he afterward explained to Raynor, when they met at the Driscoll lodging, "as Mr. Emery—Waldo Emery."

"It sounds distinguished, certainly."

"Yes; and he seemed a gentlemanly sort of fellow."

"Cultivated?" asked Stephen.

nor and Lansing bade the group good-afternoon and passed out from the house. Even in the broad sunshine Raynor still fancied that he could see before him the delicate, firm figure of Monda, in her dress of heliotrope tints, with violet silk in a puffed collar round her throat, and a falling bit of lace. "Is it the same Monda," he wondered; "the same that I saw last night?"

He had wholly forgotten Wakeman until, when Lansing and he came opposite the entrance to the lawn-tennis club-grounds, he suddenly caught sight of a wiry, bronze-com-



Drawn by F. C. Gordon.

SATURDAY MORNING'S WORK.

*Drawn by Culmer Barnes.*

REAL AND IDEAL.

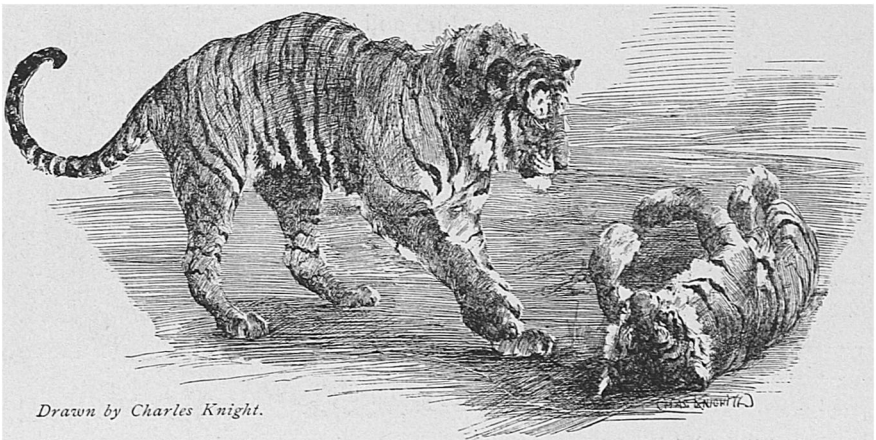
"Well, that's hard to answer," Lansing parried him. "Culture, now, seems to be grown in market-gardens and supplied in bulk. People get an outfit of manners, which they hire by the day or week, you may say, as easily as they hire costumes for a masked ball. Perhaps it's because the manners of 'good society' are so wretchedly rude that they are so easy to imitate."

"All of which doesn't seem to answer my question," said Raynor. "But if the distinguished Emery is a gentleman to-day, either he is playing a part now, or he was playing one on the sloop. I've got it, old man! He's a detective."

"Quite likely," Lansing returned. "He didn't tell much about himself, and I learned that he was staying at a small farm-house on the outskirts of the village. But whom or what is he detecting? as the German phrase-book would say."

"Ah, that's for Wakeman to tell us, if he is the person Emery is hunting. By the way, what has become of Wakeman? Let's go out and find him."

Lansing consented readily; but it was another matter to carry out this happy thought. Days passed, and neither did the mysterious traveller come to light nor could any clue to his whereabouts be gained. "If he had been a rabbit or a wood-

*Drawn by Charles Knight.*

TIGER AND TIGRESS AT PLAY.

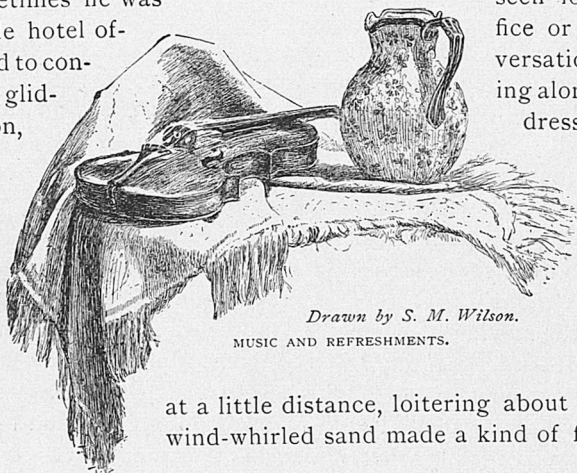


Drawn by Harry Fenn.

OUTSKIRTS OF LYNDBURST.

are in the water, and the menhaden show where bluefish are running."

It was true that Mr. Waldo Emery remained on the scene, though he no longer appeared in his conspicuous blazer of the first day, or frequented the places of greatest resort. Sometimes he was sively in the little hotel of-though disinclined to con- sining noticed him glid- in a shabby wagon, clothes, and with partly over his cloudy day, when blowing on the Monda was, many brightly ures in the strolling groups, observed Emery flying spray and him.



Drawn by S. M. Wilson.

MUSIC AND REFRESHMENTS.

at a little distance, loitering about the dunes, where wind-whirled sand made a kind of faint mist around

"The fellow has got his eye on something or somebody," Lansing muttered to his comrade. "But why does he squint so? Why doesn't he look at the object directly and talk out straight, like a man? Let's go up to him and ask what he has got in his gizzard, anyhow."

"Nonsense!" answered Stephen. "Let him alone. If he has any eye left, in that sand-whirl, it is probably by this time full of silica and other gritty particles. As for his gizzard, it will soon contain nothing but sea-salt."

"Well," grumbled Lansing, "as a detective he is a failure. He makes himself too various and prominent. But if I can't arouse your animosity to him in any other way, I'll tell you this, my boy: I think *you* are the man he's running down."

"I!"

thrush," declared the energetic painter, who always wanted people, pictures, and things to be definite and discoverable, "he could not have hidden himself more effectually. My belief is that either he is a chimera, or else he departed in the morning as quietly as he came."

"No," said Stephen; "for your Emery is still here, and Emery is after him. He's a sure sign; just as sea-gulls, hovering in the air, show where menhaden

seen lounging unobtru- fice or on the veranda, versation. Again, Lan- ing along the elmy street dressed in shabbier a soft hat pulled eyes. One the wind was beach, where one among the costumed fig- resting or the two men



Drawn by Henry Sandham.

WATCHING THE SCENE BELOW.

"Why not? Wouldn't you make as good a criminal as he does a detective? How do you know that he hasn't been sent by the government to see that you don't entirely abandon the weather signal service? Or he may be the agent of some Secret Society of Artists, appointed to watch you and prevent your being false to your mission."

So they laughed together. Yet



Drawn by Onofre Gari Torrent.

COMING ASHORE.



Guy Standing
92

Drawn by Guy Standing.

BELOW LONDON BRIDGE.

the impression gradually forced itself upon Stephen's mind that this man Emery was in reality watching him. "He connects me with Wakeman, having seen us together; and what an interesting situation it makes!" he reflected. "I suppose I'm 'a link in the chain of evidence,' but if so, it's rather important to know where the chain is going to. Eh, Lansing?"

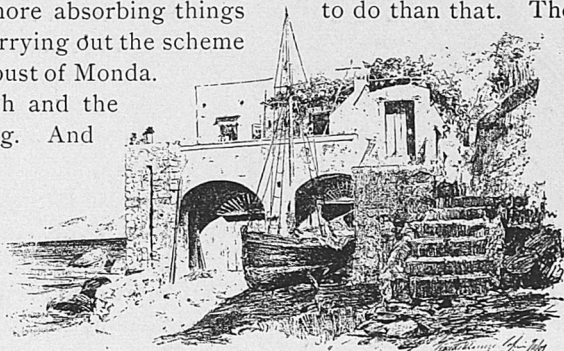
This thought gave a piquant zest to the affair, and to ascertaining just what the man's purpose might be in this kind of spy-work; though it must be owned that Stephen was annoyed by it, too. "I can't very well demand an explanation," he said, "when the fellow has never so much as spoken to me. How can we ask him why he is staying here, before we have even identified the house where he told you he's staying? Bah! It may end in my turning detective myself."

III.

BUT he had pleasanter and more absorbing things two friends had lost no time in carrying out the scheme of Raynor's modelling a portrait-bust of Monda. "Strike while her promise is fresh and the clay is yielding!" cried Lansing. And Stephen struck.

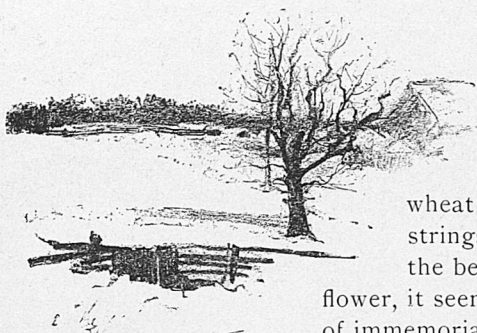
In the roomy grounds about the antique mansion where Monda lived with her mother, Mrs. Rhodes—a sweet, subdued old lady, whom Raynor poetically likened to an evening cloud, bearing upon its

to do than that. The



Drawn by Harley D. Nichols.

UNDER VENETIAN SKIES.

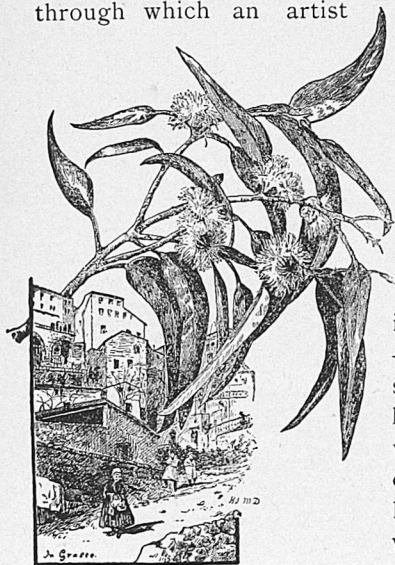


Drawn by Albert E. Sterner.

THE COUNTRY IN WINTER.

Raynor exclaimed, when his materials had been brought together, and he was about to begin modelling, under the auspices of Lansing and Mrs. Rhodes at a respectful distance. For it had been decided to attempt the work here, neither of the men having an available studio.

The whole proceeding had been impulsive, and the situation was odd. Raynor and Monda were barely acquainted, yet here they found themselves plunged into the intimate relation of sitter and portrayer, of model and artist. The sculptor was bending all his faculties to read the nature and the soul of the young woman before him, in order to reproduce her form and all the meaning of her face and character in clay. She, on her part, was quietly but intently observing him in those various phases of meditation, sharp insight, and action through which an artist



Drawn by H. J. MacDonnell.

IN GRASSE.

bosom this lovely daughter Monda like a star—there was a square old out-house, dedicated to the baffled muse of this same daughter's painting. It made a charming, half-rustic studio, with its simple colored hangings, bunches of wheat and grasses caught against the walls, and strings of "old gold" corn ears drooping from the beams. Haunted by perfumes of herb and flower, it seemed also to be pervaded by an atmosphere of immemorial harvests and the promise of sweet plenty in the years to come.

"If ever a man could work well, it should be here!"

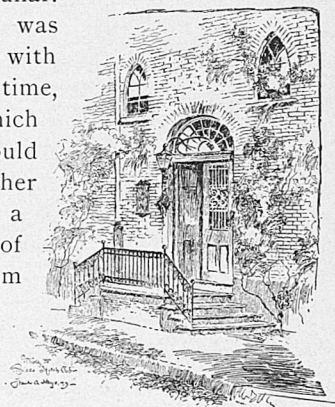


Drawn by Edith S. Lesley.

MAKING A CALL.

when busy passes unconsciously. In the ordinary case of a man working with a hired model this mutual relation might not have anything remarkable about it; but in this present instance the conditions were peculiar. Raynor felt that he was making acquaintance with Monda for the first time, through the material which he was trying to mould into a form resembling her—a form that would be a sort of tangible estimate of her, and might teach him what he really thought of her, although only his heart could tell him what feeling she aroused.

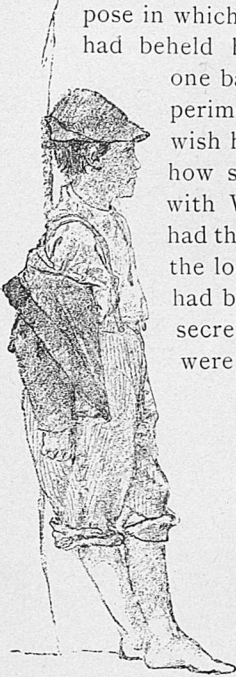
He had chosen to have her assume the



Drawn by Frank Allison Hays.

ENTRANCE TO PHILADELPHIA SKETCH CLUB.

pose in which he had seen her first, that night when, unobserved himself, he had beheld her at the window in the moonlight, leaning on the sill with one bare arm. To get her into this pose required a good deal of experiment, ingenuity, and tact, as well as contact. Of course he did not wish her to know what he was aiming at. It was a secret from her, how she had been revealed to him in that strange midnight glimpse, with Wakeman by his side in the darkness of the street; and how she had then seemed to realize his monitory vision of a few nights earlier in the lonely Equitable tower. While they were debating the attitude she had better take, he had a curious dread that she might discover this secret, for she seemed to see so much with those soft, retiring eyes that were yet so innocent, calm, and child-like. He tried first one position,



Drawn by J. G. Brown.
JUST BEFORE THE "EX-TRA" IS OUT.



Drawn by William H. Drake.
ONE OF A MIGHTY RACE.

ment, and they began over again.

In the same way he had to try various costumes, various draperies, not daring to describe to her the simple, negligent robe she had worn at the window. At last he said, "It seems to me that something loose and light, something open, with easy folds around the shoulders, might do;" and so, after some reluctance, she caused to be brought from the house the identical soft tea-gown that he had in mind.

In all this there was a degree of what Robert Browning calls "fine mysteriousness," which became intensely fascinating to Raynor. If it involved any duplicity, might not that be excused—since it was itself harmless—on the ground that, to succeed at all with the bust, he must guard and maintain Monday's freedom from self-consciousness?

When it came to the final adjustment of the pose, he was obliged to touch

then another, and pretended to consider it carefully. Once, when she had taken a position that he distinctly did not want, he ran to the stand on which the formless lump of clay reposed and made sundry touches as though to begin work. But in a few moments he stopped and shook his head. "No, that isn't the right thing, after all," he said, with an air of disappoint-



Drawn by Lyell Carr.

TAKING A SNACK.

her bare arm so as to arrange the poise of the elbow and the delicate backward curve of the forearm and palm precisely as he wanted it. Something like fire ran through his veins, on which there followed a quick and cooling thrill. He would have found it difficult to describe the quality of this sensation, which appeared to be something more ethereal than sense. It was to him as

though he had been allowed to touch a

soul at the moment when it was entering human life, full-grown, yet with no perceptible stain upon it. The virtue of healing plants and exquisite blossoms, of pure air and gentle dew, seemed to pass into him at that contact. I don't know how to describe it better than in the terms he once used in speaking to me of it, that it was like participating in the freshness and joy of the original creation of earth and man and woman.

This sounds exaggerated; but we must remember that many people have been in love before Raynor, and that numbers among them have had clear and penetrating perceptions of deep spiritual truths, even if they did not always live up to them.

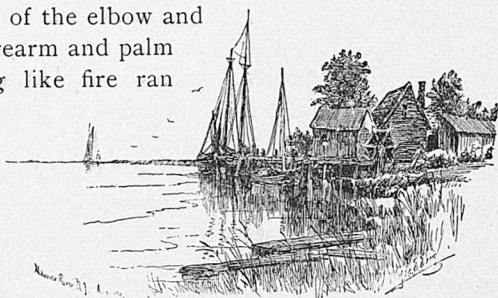
as he began his was taking part existence, or

Raynor certainly felt, work in earnest, that he in the mystery of Monda's in that of re-creating her. And she, with her reassuring smile, said: "No one has succeeded before, Mr. Raynor; but you deserve to, because you take so much pains in preparing."

"I don't call it taking pains," he answered, with a certain bluffness; "but taking pleasure."

This speech, under other circumstances, might have sounded like an obvious compliment, and rather flat. But Raynor's sincerity in it was so genuine that it became a word of good omen. Yet, as he began shaping the clay, he trembled like a racer awaiting the signal for starting.

In a few days he grew aware that all this mutual study between Monda



Drawn by George E. Essig.

MAURICE RIVER, N. J., AT REST.



Drawn by George Wharton Edwards.

A PEASANT GIRL.



Drawn by James Hall.

A PERSONAL DUTY.



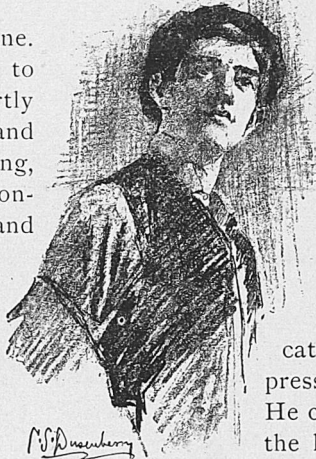
Drawn by David Wilson Jordan.
A SCOTCH LASSIE.

casionally enlivened the scene. came to talk idealism and to ate countenance and portly all his unacquired wealth and an active dabbler in painting, of intellectual "impression- of which was that he and short but sharp discussions of view. Then, besides, nervous, excitable little who was a fervent advo- and simple—"fleshly im- it so," he often declared. of the nude which made and interesting as a piece of raw beef hanging in the butcher's stall, and much more alarming and repulsive. He had such a knack of overspreading what should have been a fair and pleasing surface of vital humanity with morbid tints of copper, blue, crimson, rank yellow, violet, green, or gray—representing lights and shadows—in violent streaks and splotches, that when you saw his works accommodatingly displayed in the gallery of the Fine Arts' Building, or elsewhere, you at once had thoughts of flying to the Bellevue morgue for agreeable contrast and relief.

No one was allowed to examine the bust; Raynor having fixed a screen at some distance to shield it from the others, while not shadowing it; and as soon as he ended a day's work a hanging cylinder was let down from above, like an extinguisher, and

and himself, together with his own effort to produce a good portrait, was the centre of a small drama which was going on around him and included several persons, especially Selden, the young millionaire, and Dora Morton, the million-heiress. These two kept dropping in to chat in the rustic studio while the modelling progressed; and, although they were outwardly quite devoted to each other, it did not take Raynor long to discover that Selden's eye was upon Monda, and that Selden was jealous of him for absorbing so much of her attention. The sittings were not long, but Stephen rested often, for a few minutes, and talked with the others. Instantly, Selden would make his way to Monda's side and converse with her alone. Mrs. Lansing had ar-

rived in Easthampton with her babies, and oc- So, too, Schemerhorn illustrate it with his rose-figure. Selden, in spite of its demoralizing ease, was and had set up as a sort ist; "the chief advantage Schemerhorn held many from their opposing points there was Albaugh, a pale, man, dark under the eyes, cate of impressionism impure pressionism, if you choose to call He could produce, at will, a study the human body almost as real



Drawn by C. S. Dusenberry.
A STURDY LAD.



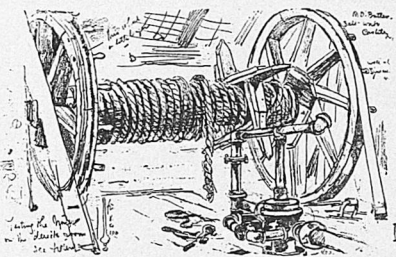
Drawn by Martha S. Baker.
AN EVERYDAY ITALIAN.

locked over the bust. In revenge for this exclusion, Selden and Albaugh made clandestine sketches of Monda while she sat to him; until Stephen, in irritation, declared one day, "This is not a sketch class!"

Their versions of Monda, to say truth, were so bad that no one would look at them. But Albaugh persuaded her to give him a few separate sittings for a special attempt in color; not a portrait, but a study. In fact he rapidly produced several studies which, taken together, made an "impression" that she had been reflected at various angles by some sort of crinkled mirrors filmed with a dizzying confusion of tints.

One day the whole party made an early trip by train from Bridgehampton to the Shinnecock Hills, and visited the Summer School of Painting there. Monda was persuaded to stand for a sketch class; while the quiet, competent master of the institution—with his pointed Van Dyke beard and mustache, himself looking like a Velasquez courtier come to life—watched them reservedly, a reticent sparkle of amusement in his eye. The result here was the same—total failure, even among all those uncommonly bright young women and young men. None of them were satisfied with their own attempts.

Monda laughed, not at their failures, but at their rueful



Drawn by Harry Fenn.

IN THE DERRICK ROOM.



Drawn by Camilla G. Whitcomb.

LOW TIDE.



Drawn by Carlton T. Chapman.

AT MOUNT ST. MICHEL.

faces. "Well," she said, "I cannot paint, though I've tried. I can only be painted *at*, and even then I seem to miss being a good target."

Then the master, with his gracious smile, taking her hand, remarked: "I congratulate you, Miss Rhodes, on being so far beyond the reach of even the best of art."

On the way back, as they drove in the open stage from Bridgehampton, a merry set, homeward, Monda—the subject having been returned to—exclaimed again: "Why will people go on trying to make pictures of me?"

Really it mortifies me to be so unfitted for art, even as a subject."

Selden saw his chance and put in: "But, my dear Miss Rhodes, the most difficult subject is, to the true artist—and I may say, the true man—always the most inspiring."

It would have been strange if Monda had not been pleased with this pretty turn. But though she smiled, she said only, "It makes me seem peculiar, and I don't like to be so."

In his comfortable, solid manner, Schemerhorn made some remarks about the need of



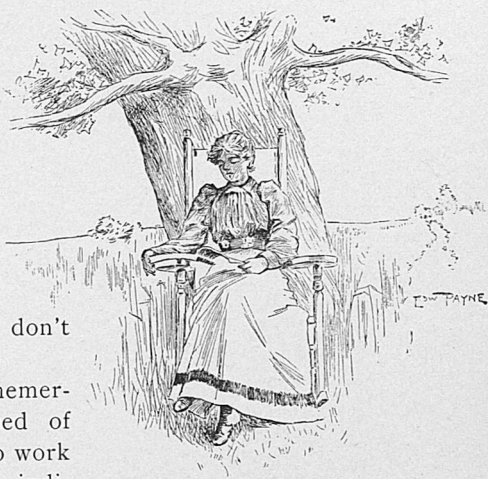
Drawn by M. R. Dixon.
A PRIVATE REHEARSAL.

going to work at each individual subject in just the right way. "The trouble with some of our friends is that they 'plunge;' they have too much enthusiasm. Ideality is not enthusiasm: it is a settled attitude." And Schemerhorn himself looked every pound settled in his corner of the stage. He seemed to imply, too, that if *he* undertook to paint Monda, the problem would be solved. Still it was a fact worth observing, that neither he nor the master they had seen that day ever made any move in her direction. "I should think all this would make you feel pretty uncomfortable, Raynor," he added, cheerfully. "To see people bowled over right and left, confessing that in art Miss Rhodes is too much for them! And here you are, a solitary survivor in the field, like a man in a battle——"

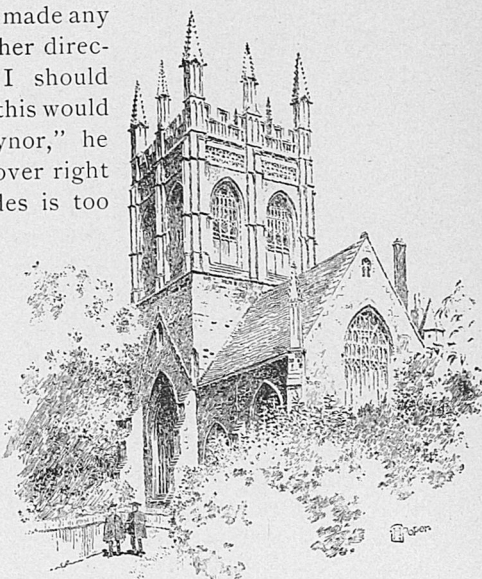
"But the others are painters," Raynor objected, "and carry the small arms. I am a sculptor, and have the artillery."

His bold assertion aroused protest. "I hope to demonstrate to you some time," declared Selden, "that the truly intellectual impressionism is the only medium for such elusive effects. Your heavy artillery of clay is too unwieldy."

"Yes, yes; acknowledge yourself beaten!" Schemerhorn counselled Raynor,



Drawn by Edward Payne.
ON A SUMMER AFTERNOON.



Drawn by Charles Edward Hooper.
ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST CHURCH, MERTON COLLEGE, OXFORD, ENGLAND.



*Drawn by
A. D. Blashfield.
STUDY OF A HEAD.*

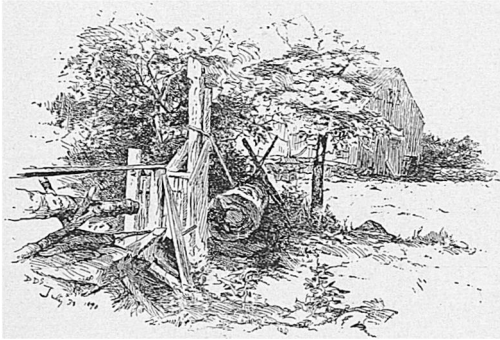
with lazy ease. "You have rushed in, my boy, where angels fear to tread."

"On the contrary," said Stephen, quietly, "I have supposed myself to be following precisely the path trodden by an angel."

There was a burst of merriment from the whole party at this broadside of sentiment. "Artillery, indeed?" cried Lansing. "Yes, Stephen, you fired a whole battery, that time; but your guns carried only roses and figures of speech."



*Drawn by Charles Edward Hooper.
A CONNECTICUT HOME.*



*Drawn by D. D. Smith.
A FARM YARD.*

And Monda laughed, too, but in a way all blithe and unperturbed, with a child's fresh yet slightly puzzled surprise. It was quite marvellous how she bore all this discussion of herself, her pictorial possibilities, and even the hint of rival admirations on the part of the young men, without for a moment becoming self-conscious. In fact, all these things—though she showed regret at not being more amenable to art—seemed to fall upon her like drops of dew on a flower; adding a little to her simple beauty for the moment, without

disturbing her, and soon shedding themselves or evaporating, to leave her unchanged.

Next day, when the men were together at Lansing's hut among the sas-safras trees, that artist said to Raynor: "I really think you have tackled something visionary, and beyond our range. Monda is a dream, not a reality."

"Very well," retorted Stephen. "Why isn't a dream as good and genuine a thing for us, as the tangible? You can't paint the actual Monda herself, I grant you; and probably I can't make her look like the real Monda, in sculpture; but we can produce something that contains the *idea* of her. In art, the chief value of the solid fact is the way we look at it, or what we *think* about it. The thinking comes out in the way we represent the object, or what we make of it. I tell you, the whole difficulty in the case of Monda is, that all our American art, to-day, is



*Drawn by M. E. Dignam.
THE EMPTY NEST.*



Drawn by Harry E. Stevens.

SPRINGTIME.

aglow with genial indignation, "you do very well, Raynor, for a beginner! As you have given me a dose of bitters, allow me to offer you this glass of perfect, soothing claret, imported at Selden's expense." (They were lunching.)

"Have you heard," Selden inquired, "how Dora Morton describes Monda? She calls her 'The Unpaintable Girl.'"



Drawn by Marie Guise Newcomb.

FRIENDS OF A MULTITUDE.

"Very clever," said Schemerhorn.

"And that reminds me," Albaugh now observed, "of a theory which has occurred to me concerning The Unknowable in Art.

If, as many of our recent philosophers contend, the principle of the universe is The Unknowable, why, of course the vital principle of art must be unknowable, too; and therefore we come promptly to the Unattainable in art. Your religious painters of the Middle Ages—even the best of them, Raphael, Angelo, and the rest—explored in that direction about as far as anyone could go, but certainly they did not reach the goal. Modern religious painters, so-



Drawn by Lyell Carr.

FRIENDSHIP.

called or real—among the Germans and French, or Holman Hunt in England—have come still shorter of it. All that is played out, now. That's why I am an impressionist and confine myself to the Knowable."

"But are you sure that even what you propose to yourself is attainable?" asked Selden, with sweet sarcasm.

"I didn't know you could chatter so well, Albaugh," Lansing remarked, giving him the appreciative glance of a connoisseur in conversation. "But, all the same, you are entirely wrong."

"Yes, you're wrong," Stephen also asserted. "In the first place, you don't prove your premise. It is merely an assumption to say that the principle of the universe is The

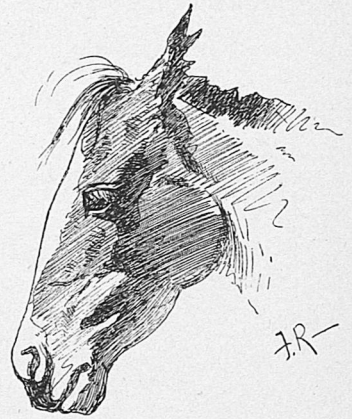
Unknowable. The philosophers who uphold that notion never prove it, either. We certainly do know the principle, the ruling power, of the universe, as well as we know astronomy—and rather better. We also know that it involves clearly defined elements of mystery. Of course we can shirk all that in art, just as so many shirk it in life and character. But if we shirk, and if we ignore the great truths, our work will suffer accordingly. In painting, or sculpture, or writing, don't we touch all the mysteries and the everlasting principles? If we say that we can't grapple with them and don't know what we're about,

then we simply confess ourselves and our art imbecile. The striking fact about Monda Rhodes is, that while she is outwardly attractive, as so many women are, she seems to contain in a very unusual degree these higher mysteries of art and life. And that's why it is so hard to make any true representation of her, either off-hand or deliberately. She is a test problem."

"Moonshine!" exclaimed Albaugh.

But Selden seemed to be impressed by what Stephen had said, and raised his glass to him in a silent toast that was half a ratification and half challenge.

A long discussion ensued, which they all



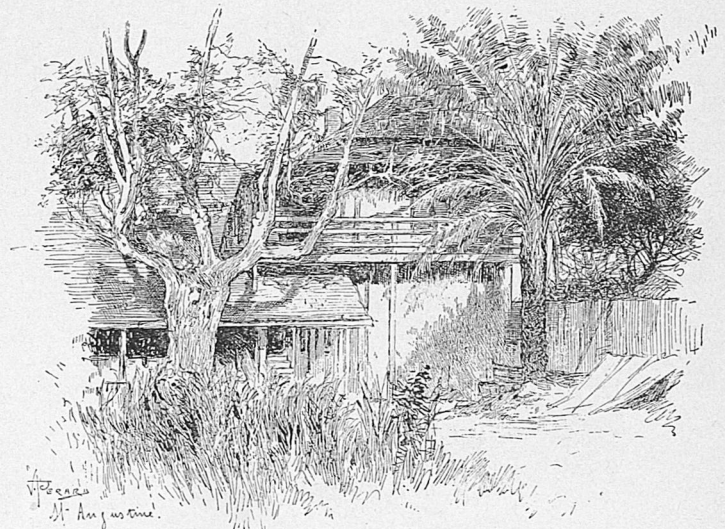
Drawn by Frederic Remington.

BRONCHO.



*Drawn by Howard
Chandler Christy.*

A STUDY SKETCH.



Drawn by Victor Perard.

SCENE IN ST. AUGUSTINE, FLA.



Drawn by
Freeland A. Carter.

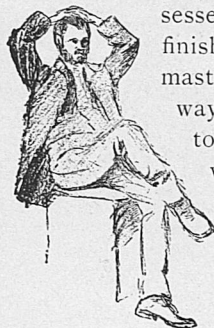
A TEN-MINUTE SKETCH.

finally dissolved by a plunge in the surf.

When the next sitting for the portrait-bust occurred in the out-house studio, Raynor would allow no visitors except Mrs. Rhodes, Lansing, and Dora Morton.

His work had reached too critical a point to admit of further interruption by debates. As he toiled away—with bird-songs floating in from the orchard, and the chirring of insects, while he inhaled the delicate aroma of dried grasses—he felt that he was literally bringing Monda to life out of the substance of mother earth, in the clay which he manipulated. At other moments, despair of making any satisfactory representation seized him; and then the moist clay under his fingers seemed like the touch of some tall cliff which he was trying to climb, that slipped and slipped away from him until he was in danger of gliding downward to its base, defeated, crushed.

During this time of struggle, Monda permitted him to look over a number of her black and white sketches and color-studies. He found in them extraordinary traits of insight and power. The essence of some fine perception was always there; but she was never able to complete the thing technically. Raynor was much impressed by this fact, that—very much like himself—while she failed in her work, she always perceived the point that it ought to reach. And yet in her productions there was something that he himself could not compass; a certain child-like character, exquisite and inimitable. He would rather have possessed them than the most finished pieces of many masters. "In art she will always be a child," he confided to Mrs. Rhodes; "but as a woman she has the rarest and most far-reaching perceptions."



Drawn by
Freeland A. Carter.

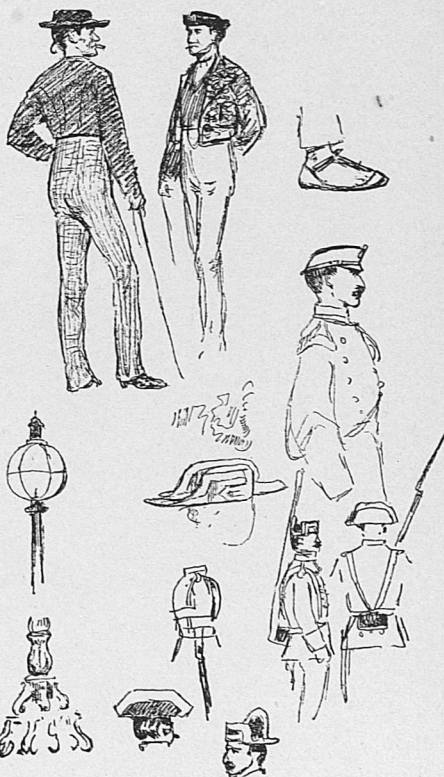
RESTING.

But, the more he assumed to analyze Monda, and to define her strong traits, the less confidence he felt in himself. "I have



Drawn by G. A. Traver.

MOVEMENT UNDER DIFFICULTY.



Drawn by Charles S. Reinhart.

STREET SKETCHES IN SPAIN.

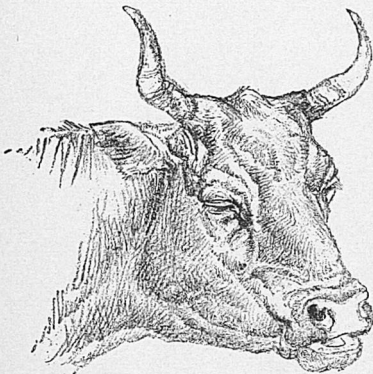
shortcomings like hers, in art," he mused. "I cannot perfect a work any more than she. But are my perceptions as fresh and unspoiled as hers? Could she help me, somehow, to fill out what I lack?"

But how? How could she help him? He was drawing closer to her all the time, through constant association; but could there be any permanent union of their lives? Was he, perhaps, actually in love with her? It was the first time the word had occurred to him, and he almost shuddered at the sudden question.

Yet in case it were true, what would be the outcome? What career could he offer her? Was not all his future, even his ability, uncertain? "Success in art, first," he exclaimed to himself, by way of maxim, "and afterward—

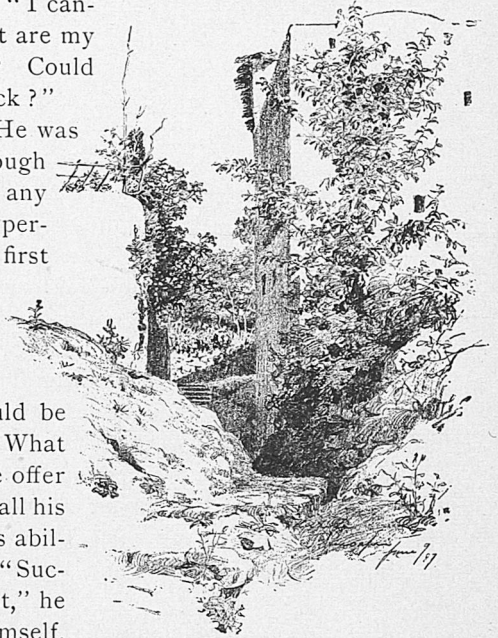
love!" Nevertheless, his mind kept returning to the thought of how Monda and he might work together.

In talk with Lansing and his wife, and with Dora Morton, he had eagerly gathered something of Monda's history. The family that her mother had married into had long been settled in this region, and were the owners of an old manor from Charles I. of England of the family. But, —Monda's grandfather— had set aside his elder son (Monda's father) and willed the property to his younger son, a bachelor, who still remained unmarried. This bachelor son was a sort of miser with regard to possession of the estate, though prodigal in his personal expense, and lived chiefly in Europe, on the income drawn from the old manor. Monda's father had died some years ago. Only the ancient house in



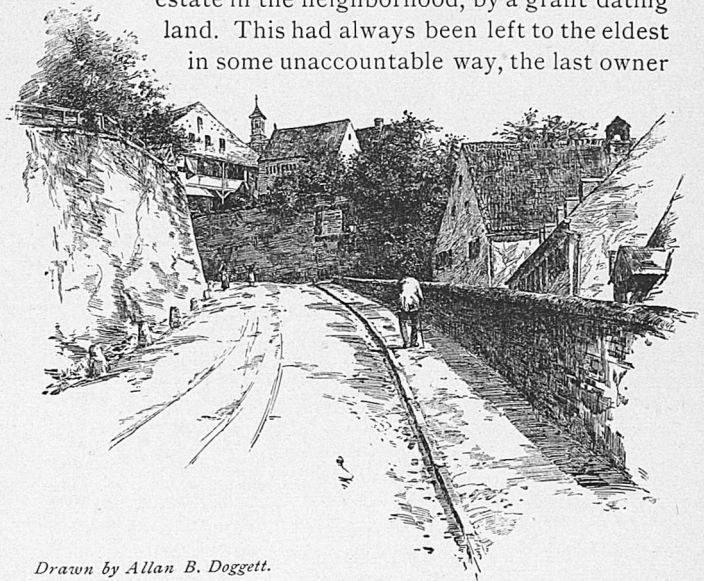
Drawn by Peter Moran.

MUNCH.



Drawn by Harley D. Nichols.

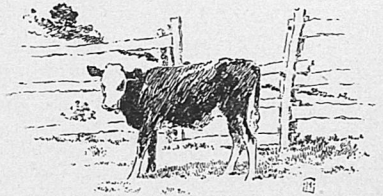
RUINS OF ANCIENT GRANDEUR.



Drawn by Allan B. Doggett.

A QUAIN OLD STREET.

Easthampton, with a modest area of land attached to it, and a small annual income, remained to Mrs. Rhodes; and there she lived in a sort of faded dignity, with Monda beside her, fresh as a lark. Both of them were almost as poor as field-flowers; for they toiled not, neither did they spin. Yet they existed pleasantly, and went to New York in the winter—which was not so very pleasant, but was regarded as a penance necessary to be offered to



Drawn by Charles Edward Hooper.

BOSSIE.



Drawn by Yeend King.

"THERE WAS A MILLER LOVED A MAID."

"No," laughed Dora. "It is probably guessable; but no one has guessed it, yet."

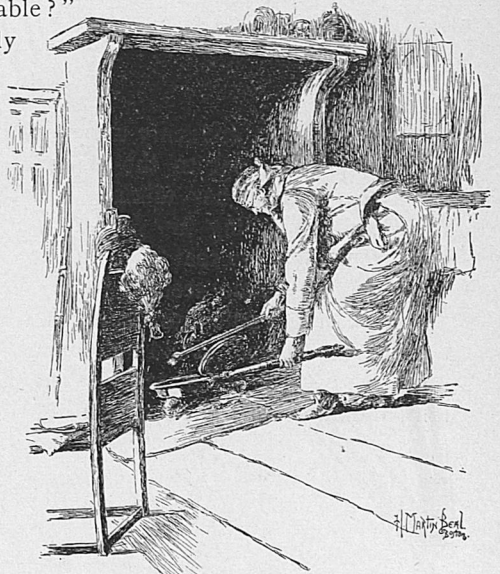
Stephen's mind instantly reverted to Wakeman and to that enigmatic personage, Emery: While he was considering these shady persons, he was startled one morning by discovering, inside the locked cylinder enclosing the bust, and lying against the moist clay, a letter signed by Wakeman! As no one but Raynor himself had a key to this cylinder, and as the door of the rustic studio was also kept fastened, he was astounded. The letter said that Wakeman had important information to give concerning the Rhodes manor, and that Monda and Raynor must meet him at a retired spot in the country to obtain it.

"This is a bold game!" Stephen meditated. "If the man really has a secret,

society in that gaudy, dusty, rattling metropolis.

"But there is something peculiar about the legacy of the main estate," Dora Morton whispered to Raynor. "We never have been able to understand it, quite. It was left to the eldest son, from the time of the early grant; unusual, of course, in America. But *now* to interrupt the succession! . . . There has been some question whether it was done by fair means. And what is extraordinary is, that Lee Rhodes, the present owner, has just come back suddenly from Europe, and has settled down on the manor like a hawk seizing his prey. He seems to be afraid that somebody may, even now, break his father's will and take the property away from him."

"There is a mystery, then, about the Rhodeses," said Raynor. "Does it belong to the unknowable?"



Drawn by H. Martin Beal.

BEDTIME.

why does he throw it right into my hands?" Yet if Wakeman's purpose was honest, this might be the wisest course to follow, since Stephen was known to be frequently with Monda. And it was to Monda and her mother that Stephen proceeded at once with this curious document. They were greatly agitated. "It is true, Mr. Raynor," said Mrs. Rhodes, "I may tell you in confidence, that we have always suspected something wrong about the will. But who is this Wakeman? What can he know? I never heard of him before." And something as near to a flame of suspicion as she was able

to permit rose in her mild eyes. Then Raynor told what little he knew of the man. They discussed the matter for some time without reaching any decision; but when Mrs. Rhodes said, "How

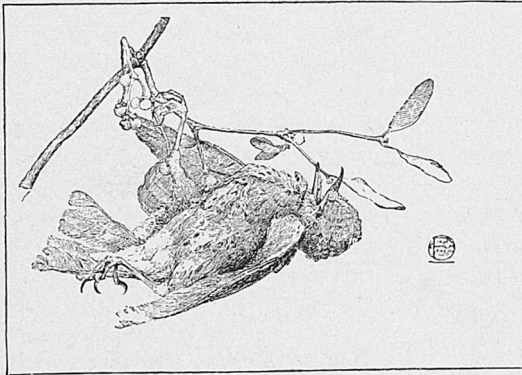


Drawn by J. Wells Champney.

CHILD STUDY.

do we know he is not plotting something against us all?" Stephen thrilled with joy at being thus included with Monda and her mother. The modelling, however, proved fruitless that morning. Monda was evidently disturbed. Instead of the calm moonlight in which he usually fancied he saw her, broken shadows seemed to pass across her face.

That very evening, as it happened, a little garden party was to be given by the Rhodes-



Drawn by Malcolm Fraser.

A SPARROW'S DEATH.

es. In the dusk, Raynor suddenly missed Monda. With Lansing, he pressed out to the veranda. There, beneath the vines, he saw her talking to Mrs. Lansing. He stood still, clutching his friend's arm. "Look!" he said. "Do you see that?"

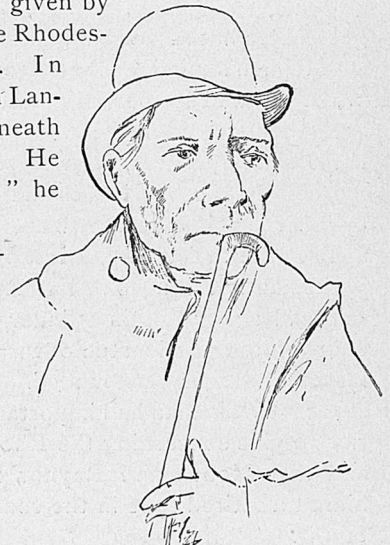
A delicate flame seemed to play around Monda's head, and a pale light hovered along the outlines of her figure. It did not come from the windows or any of the distant lanterns, but was a faint radiance apparently emanating from herself.

"Yes," said Lansing, "I see it. That is a peculiarity of Monda's."

"A peculiarity?" echoed Raynor. "It is a marvel!"

"But very few persons have been able to perceive it," Lansing responded, solemnly, "marvel though it is."

To be continued.



Drawn by G. A. Traver.

AN OLD CHARACTER.